

address humanitarian needs. This legislation improves the incentives for small businesses to participate in the program, by ensuring that the prize—a certificate for expedited processing of certain matters at the USPTO—can be transferable to third parties.

Yesterday, we held a hearing with witnesses from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and industry innovators who described the central role that intellectual property has played in allowing their businesses to grow and innovate. We also heard about some of the enforcement challenges that those in IP-intensive industries face as they seek to protect their intellectual property.

As a cochair of the Congressional Trademark Caucus, which we just relaunched this week, I recognize the value of trademarks and their impact on society and the economy, as well as how counterfeiting can seriously impact consumer health and safety. Counterfeiting of goods presents a worldwide problem with enormous health and economic impacts, costing the global economy over 2.5 million jobs per year, while draining tax revenue and hurting the ability of American companies to compete in foreign markets.

Similarly, trade secret theft is an increasingly serious problem. A report by the IP Commission found that annual losses due to trade secret theft are over \$300 billion and is the cause of an estimated loss of 2.1 million American jobs. That is why we passed into law the Defend Trade Secrets Act of 2016. This important legislation brings needed uniformity to trade secret law and provides more certainty to the innovators who rely on trade secrets to develop novel solutions to important problems that face us as a nation.

Intellectual property is a key driver of innovation and fundamental building block of our modern economy. This World IP Day, as we recognize the positive impacts IP has on innovation, let us continue to find ways to work together to ensure its protection against infringement and maintain the United States enduring position as the most innovative and creative country in the world.

TRIBUTE TO MARK SCHLEFER

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I would like to congratulate and honor a Vermont resident for his outstanding commitment to ensuring transparency between the Federal Government and the American public. Mark Schlefer of Putney, VT, played an integral role in the creation of the Freedom of Information Act, FOIA, that came into effect in 1967. Since its incorporation, FOIA has given the American people the right to request to access records from any Federal agency and has required agencies to post certain categories of information and frequently requested records online.

Mr. Schlefer was inspired to join the legal group that drafted FOIA after

working with a shipping client, Pacific Far East Line, which was denied tariff documentation to stop at the Mariana Islands by the Federal Maritime Commission. Mr. Schlefer was upset to find that the Federal Maritime Commission was not required to provide an explanation of the justification behind the rejection.

Along with two other lawyers who came across similar situations with government agencies, Mr. Schlefer helped to draft the legislation for FOIA. After years of working on the bill and convincing both Members of the House and the Senate to support the legislation, it was signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson on July 4, 1966.

FOIA helped pave the way for greater government transparency. Increased transparency restores faith in governance by holding government officials accountable to the American people. A truly transparent government roots out systemic waste, fraud, and abuse. It is clear that we need to maintain the transparency and accountability of government to the people it is meant to represent. I strongly believe that, as a democracy, we must strive to make our government as transparent as possible and that citizens should be able to obtain information from the government in a reasonable fashion.

Without FOIA, much of the U.S. Government would still be closed off to the American people. This legislation has been an inspiration to other governments and has served as a model throughout the world for opening government information to the public. Since FOIA was enacted nearly 50 years ago, similar Freedom of Information laws have been passed in all 50 States and 93 other nations.

Mark Schlefer has demonstrated an extraordinary level of commitment to ensuring the American people had access to more information throughout the Federal Government. Since its initial enactment, all three branches of the Federal Government have recognized the FOIA as a vital part of our democracy. I heartily applaud Mr. Schlefer for leading the way to a more transparent government. I have no doubt that his outstanding life work has had a significant and positive impact on people and their governments throughout the world.

TRIBUTE TO STEVE STIVERS AND BRAD WENSTRUP

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I would like to recognize my friend and colleague, Congressman STEVE STIVERS, and congratulate him on his promotion to brigadier general in the Ohio National Guard.

STEVE has served our State and our Nation in uniform for more than three decades. When his guard unit was called up in 2005, he served our country in Operation Iraqi Freedom. His leadership earned him the Bronze Star, and his service and sacrifice earned him the honor of a grateful nation.

But STEVE hasn't been content to only serve in uniform—he is working to support his fellow soldiers in Congress. He and I have worked together to make sure that servicemembers who suffer traumatic brain injuries have their medical records given from the DOD to the VA. We are working to designate the new Ohio veterans Museum in Columbus as the National Veterans Museum.

As persuasive as STEVE is, he is nothing compared to his mother. A few years ago, STEVE's mother, Carol, brought to my attention the need to preserve the Parker House—a way station on the Underground Railroad located in Ripley, OH. She wanted to incorporate it into the National Park System.

I worked with STEVE, who of course couldn't say no to his mother, and others in the Ohio delegation, including JOYCE BEATTY, to preserve this house where a freed slave worked and helped others find their way to freedom. This January, the National Park Service award \$50,000 to the Ohio History Connection to help preserve the sites throughout Ohio that played critical roles in the civil rights movement, including the Parker House.

STEVE is not the only member of our delegation to carry on the proud tradition of Ohioans serving our Nation in uniform. I would also like to congratulate my friend BRAD WENSTRUP on his promotion to colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve.

BRAD also served a tour in Iraq as a combat surgeon. He was awarded a Bronze Star and a Combat Action Badge and earned the honor and gratitude of all Ohioans. It is not just overseas where BRAD serves our troops. He fulfills his Reserve duties, treating our wounded soldiers at Walter Reed, and fights to ensure our servicemembers and veterans have the support they deserve on the House Armed Services Committee and Veterans' Affairs Committee.

Whether it is supporting our State's civil rights heritage or supporting our troops, BRAD and STEVE have always been dedicated public servants for Ohio. They are both so deserving of these promotions. We thank them and their entire families—STEVE's wife, Karen, and children Sarah and Sam, and BRAD's wife, Monica, and son Brad, Jr.—for their sacrifice for our country.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING INA M. BOON

• Mrs. McCASKILL. Mr. President, I ask the Senate to join me today in honoring the life of Ina Boon, a beloved member of the St. Louis community. With her passing, Ina has left a powerful legacy of public service that will always be cherished, and St. Louis will not be the same without her.

In addition to being a wife, a mother, and dear friend to so many, Ina was a